



News for Immediate Release
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DWR Releases Update to Groundwater Report

SACRAMENTO - The Department of Water Resources has announced the release of the long-awaited "California's Groundwater, Bulletin 118 - Update 2003."

"This represents the first comprehensive report on groundwater in the state in almost three decades," said Department of Water Resources Interim Director Michael Spear. "The bulletin includes guidance and tools that will assist local agencies in effectively managing groundwater as a sustainable part of their water supplies."

Groundwater is a vital component of California's water supply, providing 20 to 40 percent of statewide supplies in average years and an even more significant percentage in dry years. Although some basins are being well managed, groundwater is still being overdrafted at a rate of 1 to 2 million acre-feet per year statewide. Contamination in many groundwater basins is also an important issue.

California's Groundwater includes a description of current groundwater management efforts by local water agencies, lists recommended components for effective groundwater management plans, and provides a model ordinance that can be used by local governments to manage groundwater. The bulletin also describes the roles of state and federal agencies in developing groundwater management plans to protect groundwater quantity and quality.

Additionally, technical descriptions of 515 groundwater basins and subbasins are available online, including information about the geology, groundwater quantity and quality, and current groundwater management practices in the basins.

The bulletin includes findings and recommendations that will provide assistance to groundwater managers. Major recommendations are:

- Local or regional agencies should develop groundwater management plans that include management objectives to maintain a sustainable long-term supply for multiple beneficial uses if groundwater constitutes part of their water supply. The

state should continue to provide technical and financial assistance to local agencies to develop programs that assure a sustainable supply

- DWR should continue to work with local agencies to more accurately define and quantify historical overdraft and predict future water shortages
- Surface water and groundwater and groundwater quality and quantity should be managed as an integrated whole
- Recharge areas for aquifers are an important part of groundwater management and should be protected as such by land use agencies
- Data collection and analysis should be improved and coordinated with other agencies in the basin.

Contact Nancy Pashugin at pashugin@water.ca.gov or (916) 651-9233 to obtain a copy, or go on-line at <http://www.waterplan.water.ca.gov/groundwater/118index.htm>.

The Department of Water Resources operates and maintains the State Water Project, provides dam safety and flood control and inspection services, assists local water districts in water management and water conservation planning, and plans for future statewide water needs.

[Back to Top of Page](#)

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